

STATE SENATOR • HANSEN CLARKE • 1ST DISTRICT

Clarke Press Release

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SEN. CLARKE PREPARED TO AGAIN TAKE LEGAL ACTION TO STOP EXPANSION OF CHARTER SCHOOLS IN DETROIT

LANSING- Responding to the announcement that Central Michigan University is considering establishing 15 new charter schools within Detroit, State Sen. Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit) stated today that he is prepared to see that legal action is taken to block any further expansion. Sen. Clarke filed a lawsuit last year to block expansion but withdrew the suit when no one stepped forward looking to open additional charter school academies.

“I’m concerned that charter school expansion will take money away from existing public schools in Detroit and essentially create two separate and unequal school districts,” said Sen. Clarke.

“What we really need is one strong school district to serve every child in every neighborhood in the city of Detroit. Draining resources from our existing school district is counter-productive to that goal.”

Central Michigan University and Grand Valley State University have both indicated that they are considering moving forward with charter school expansion proposals. However, both institutions would have to face legal challenges before that could happen. They would also face strong opposition from parents, teachers, and community leaders who want the focus to be on fixing Detroit’s existing public schools.

“Based on the studies that I have seen, it’s highly debatable whether charter schools do a better job of educating children than public schools,” said Sen. Clarke. “What’s not debatable is that

charter schools drain our existing public schools of financial resources that could be used to raise the quality of education for all of our children.”

EDITOR’S PLEASE NOTE: An audio file of Senator Clarke discussing his opposition to charter school expansion and his plans to take legal action, if necessary, can be downloaded at: <http://www.senate.mi.gov/Audio%20Clips/01-071504.wav>